(b) the remedial measures taken by the respectives newspapers; and

(c) whether Government propose to strengthen the hands of Press Council?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) The Press Council of India upheld 352 complaints, out of the total number of 2452 complaints field against the Press for motivated reports and passed structures/gave directions to the erring newspapers during the period 1st April, 1998 to 31st March, 2001.

(b) and (c) the Press Council has been established for the purpose of preserving the freedom of the Press and maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and news agencies. The Press Council Act envisages that this will be fulfilled through such measures as building a code of conduct and encouraging a sense of responsibility and public service among journalists. Thus its role is clearly more that of a body which can induce self-regulation in the press rather that of a court with powers to ensure compliance of its directions. The effectiveness of the Press Council of India is, therefore, to be judged by the general quality of press reporting and journalism.

Terrestrial rights to national and international sports

530. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enact legislation to enable the public broadcasting to get terrestrial rights to all major national and international events, especially sports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Prasar Bharati has examined the reports of N.R. Narayanan Murty Committee and linking of expansion of its network through MTNL and BSNL cables;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction to the other recommendations of the Committee?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, the Communication Convergence Bill, 2001, introduced in Lok Sabha on 31.8.2001, has a provision in its present from that National or international events of general public interest, notified by Government in advance, shall have to be carried on the network of public service broadcaster as well. The Communications Commission shall however determine, well in advance of such event, the principles and terms for the access to the network of public service broadcaster.

(c) to (e) The Narayana Murthy Committee has *inter-alia* recommended that Prasar Bharati should explore the feasibility of a strategic tie-up initially with MTNL and subsequently with the Department of Telecom Services to set up an independent cable TV arm making maximal use of the existing MTNL/DTS infrastructure and supplementing it wherever necessary. It was also recommended that a beginning be made first in Mumbai and Delhi through MTNL, so that problems of convergence can be ironed out before proceeding to other locations. Prasar Bharati has signed an MoU with MTNL for cooperating in exploring new business opportunities and for utilising their fibre optic networks for carriage of Doordarshan service.

Viewership survey in regard to DD Bharati Channel

531. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA' : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether any viewership survey was conducted in regard to DD Bharati Channel which was recently launched.

(b) if so, the findings thereof;

(c) if not, whether any such survey will be conducted in future; and

(d) the specific measures taken for popularising the channel along the young ones?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has intimated that a study has been done in regard to DD Bharati Channel in three cities *i.e.* Delhi, Jaipur and Jalandhar. Viewership data of the three cities indicates that a niche audience is developing slowly for these channels.